

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Allowed) A computer implemented system connected to a computer network and accessible by a plurality of users for specifying, ordering, and manufacturing injection molding systems, comprising in combination:

a configuring subsystem that uses one or more customer defined parameters to generate a customized injection molding system which implements the customer defined parameters;

a processing subsystem in communication with the configuring subsystem that processes the customized injection molding system generated by the configuring subsystem to provide drawings of the customized injection molding system;

a business subsystem in communication with the configuring subsystem that calculates a cost for manufacturing the customized injection molding system and that determines a schedule for completing the customized injection molding system; and

a manufacturing subsystem in communication with the configuring subsystem that provides input for manufacturing the customized injection molding system generated by the configuring subsystem;

wherein the customized injection molding system includes a manifold plate that was partially manufactured and placed in inventory before the configuring subsystem received any customer defined parameters for the customized injection molding system.

2. (Allowed) The computer implemented system of claim 1, wherein the manifold plate is a unitary manifold plate.

3. (Allowed) The computer implemented system of claim 1, wherein the customer defined parameters comprise at least one of nozzle types, nozzle pitches, manifold shapes, manifold lengths, or manifold thickness.

4. (Allowed) The computer implemented system of claim 1, wherein the processing subsystem further provides a bill of materials for the customized injection molding system.

5. (Allowed) The computer implemented system of claim 1, wherein the configuring subsystem is in communication with a web page server and the computer network.

6. (Allowed) The computer implemented system of claim 5, wherein the computer network is the Internet.

7. (Allowed) The computer implemented system of claim 5, wherein the computer network is an Intranet.

8. (Cancelled).

9. (Allowed) The computer implemented system of claim 1, wherein the configuring subsystem provides for verification of the customized injection molding system in terms of at least one of functionality and safety.

Claims 10-16 (cancelled).

17. (Allowed) In a computer network-based system, an automated method for specifying, ordering, and manufacturing hot runner systems, comprising:

partially manufacturing a plurality of hot runner components, including manifold plates, that form at least a portion of a hot runner system in a first phase;

placing the hot runner components in inventory;

receiving one or more customer defined parameters;

using the one or more customer defined parameters in a configuration subsystem to generate a customized hot runner system;

submitting the customized hot runner system for processing to a processing subsystem;

removing the hot runner components from inventory; and

further manufacturing the hot runner components in accordance with the customer defined parameters in a second phase to create the customized hot runner system.

18. (Allowed) The method of claim 17, further including creating drawings for the customized hot runner system via the processing subsystem.

19. (Allowed) The method of claim 17, further including creating a bill of materials for the customized hot runner system via the processing subsystem.

20. (Allowed) The method of claim 17, further including determining manufacturing parameters such as, machine and tool codes based on the customized hot runner system.

21. (Allowed) The method of claim 17 wherein the manifold plates are unitary manifold plates.

22. (Allowed) The method of claim 17 wherein the manifold plates have predefined shapes for hot runner systems, and a completed manifold plate has substantially the same shape as the predefined shape of the partially manufactured manifold plate.

23. (Allowed) The method of claim 17 wherein the manifold plates are partially manufactured by drilling into each manifold plate a common melt inlet and one or more flow channels in communication with the melt inlet, the melt inlet being substantially perpendicular to the flow channels.

Claims 24-27 (cancelled).